

112TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1272

To provide for the use and distribution of the funds awarded to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, et al, by the United States Court of Federal Claims in Docket Numbers 19 and 188, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 30, 2011

Mr. PETERSON (for himself and Mr. CRAVAACK) introduced the following bill;  
which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

To provide for the use and distribution of the funds awarded to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, et al, by the United States Court of Federal Claims in Docket Numbers 19 and 188, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Minnesota Chippewa  
5       Tribe Judgment Fund Distribution Act of 2011”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds the following:

1           (1) On January 22, 1948, the Minnesota Chip-  
2       pewa Tribe, representing all Chippewa bands in Min-  
3       nesota except the Red Lake Band, filed a claim be-  
4       fore the Indian Claims Commission in Docket No.  
5       19 for an accounting of all funds received and ex-  
6       pended pursuant to the Act of January 14, 1889, 25  
7       Stat. 642, and amendatory acts (hereinafter referred  
8       to as the Nelson Act).

9           (2) On August 2, 1951, the Minnesota Chip-  
10      pewa Tribe, representing all Chippewa bands in Min-  
11      nesota except the Red Lake Band, filed a number of  
12      claims before the Indian Claims Commission in  
13      Docket No. 188 for an accounting of the Govern-  
14      ment's obligation to each of the member bands of  
15      the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe under various stat-  
16      utes and treaties that are not covered by the Nelson  
17      Act of January 14, 1889.

18          (3) On May 17, 1999, a Joint Motion for Find-  
19      ings in Aid of Settlement of the claims in Docket  
20      No. 19 and 188 was filed before the Court.

21          (4) The terms of the settlement were approved  
22      by the Court and the final judgment was entered on  
23      May 26, 1999.

24          (5) On June 22, 1999, \$20,000,000 was trans-  
25      ferred to the Department of the Interior and depos-

1       ited into a trust fund account established for the  
2       beneficiaries of the funds awarded in Docket No. 19  
3       and 188.

4           (6) Pursuant to the Indian Tribal Judgment  
5       Funds Use or Distribution Act (25 U.S.C. 1401 et  
6       seq.), Congress must act to authorize the use or dis-  
7       tribution of the judgment funds.

8           (7) On October 1, 2009, the Minnesota Chip-  
9       pewa Tribal Executive Committee passed Resolution  
10      146–09, approving a plan to distribute the judgment  
11      funds and requesting that the United States Con-  
12      gress act to distribute the judgment funds in the  
13      manner described by the plan.

14   **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

15       For the purpose of this Act:

16           (1) AVAILABLE FUNDS.—The term “available  
17      funds” means the funds awarded to the Minnesota  
18      Chippewa Tribe and interest earned and received on  
19      those funds, less the funds used for payments au-  
20      thorized under section 4.

21           (2) BANDS.—The term “Bands” means the  
22      Bois Forte Band, Fond du Lac Band, Grand Por-  
23      tage Band, Leech Lake Band, Mille Lacs Band, and  
24      White Earth Band.

1           (3) JUDGMENT FUNDS.—The term “judgment  
2       funds” means the funds awarded on May 26, 1999,  
3       to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe by the Court of  
4       Federal Claims in Docket No. 19 and 188.

5           (4) MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE.—The term  
6       “Minnesota Chippewa Tribe” means the Minnesota  
7       Chippewa Tribe, Minnesota, composed of the Bois  
8       Forte Band, Fond du Lac Band, Grand Portage  
9       Band, Leech Lake Band, Mille Lacs Band, and  
10      White Earth Band. It does not include Red Lake  
11      Band of Chippewa Indians, Minnesota.

12          (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
13      the Secretary of the Interior.

14   **SEC. 4. LOAN REIMBURSEMENTS TO MINNESOTA CHIP-**  
15                           **PEWA TRIBE.**

16          (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to re-  
17      imburse the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe the amount of  
18      funds, plus interest earned to the date of reimbursement,  
19      that the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe contributed for pay-  
20      ment of attorneys’ fees and litigation expenses associated  
21      with the litigation of Docket No. 19 and 188 before the  
22      U.S. Court of Federal Claims and the distribution of judg-  
23      ment funds.

24          (b) CLAIMS.—The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe’s claim  
25      for reimbursement of funds expended shall be—

1           (1) presented to the Secretary not later than 90  
2       days after the date of enactment of this Act;

3           (2) certified by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe  
4       as being unreimbursed to the Minnesota Chippewa  
5       Tribe from other funding sources;

6           (3) paid with interest calculated at the rate of  
7       6.0 percent per annum, simple interest, from the  
8       date the funds were expended to the date the funds  
9       are reimbursed to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe;  
10      and

11          (4) paid from the judgment funds prior to the  
12      division of the funds under section 5.

13 **SEC. 5. DIVISION OF JUDGMENT FUNDS.**

14      (a) MEMBERSHIP ROLLS.—Not later than 90 days  
15   after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Minnesota  
16   Chippewa Tribe shall submit to the Secretary updated  
17   membership rolls for each Band which shall include all en-  
18   rolled members living on the date of enactment of this Act.

19      (b) DIVISIONS.—After all funds have been reim-  
20   bursed under section 4, and the membership rolls have  
21   been updated, the Secretary shall—

22          (1) set aside for each Band a portion of the  
23      available judgment funds equivalent to \$300 for  
24      each member enrolled within each Band; and

1           (2) after the funds are divided in accordance  
2           with paragraph (1), divide 100 percent of the funds  
3           remaining into equal shares for each Band.

4           (c) SEPARATE ACCOUNTS.—The Secretary shall—

5           (1) deposit all funds described in subsection  
6           (b)(1) into a “Per Capita” account for each Band;  
7           and

8           (2) deposit all funds described in subsection  
9           (b)(2) into an “Equal Shares” account for each  
10          Band.

11          (d) WITHDRAWAL OF FUNDS.—After the Secretary de-  
12         posits the available funds into the accounts described in  
13         subsection (c), a Band may withdraw all or part of the  
14         monies in its account.

15          (e) DISBURSEMENT OF PER CAPITA PAYMENTS.—All  
16         funds described in subsection (b)(1) shall be used by each  
17         Band only for the purposes of distributing one \$300 pay-  
18         ment to each individual member of the Band. Each Band  
19         may—

20                 (1) distribute an additional \$300 to the parents  
21                 or legal guardians for each dependent Band member  
22                 instead of distributing \$300 payments to the de-  
23                 pendent Band members themselves; or

24                 (2) deposit into a trust account the \$300 pay-  
25                 ments of each dependent Band member for the ben-

1       efit of such dependent Band members, such funds to  
2       be distributed under the terms of said trust.

3       (f) DISTRIBUTION OF UNCLAIMED PAYMENTS.—One  
4       year after the funds described in subsection (b)(1) are  
5       made available to the Bands, all unclaimed payments de-  
6       scribed in subsection (e) shall be returned to the Sec-  
7       retary, who shall divide these funds into equal shares for  
8       each Band, and deposit the divided shares into the ac-  
9       counts described in subsection (c)(2) for the use of each  
10      Band.

11      (g) LIABILITY.—If a Band exercises the right to  
12      withdraw monies from its accounts, the Secretary shall not  
13      retain liability for the expenditure or investment of the  
14      monies after they are withdrawn.

15      **SEC. 6. GENERAL PROVISIONS.**

16      (a) PREVIOUS OBLIGATIONS.—Funds disbursed  
17      under this Act shall not be liable for the payment of pre-  
18      viously contracted obligations of any recipient as provided  
19      in Public Law 98–64 (25 U.S.C. 117b(a)).

20      (b) INDIAN JUDGMENT FUNDS DISTRIBUTION  
21      ACT.—All funds distributed under this Act are subject to  
22      the provisions in the Indian Judgment Funds Distribution  
23      Act (25 U.S.C. 1407).

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